



# Community School E- Newsletter

May 2010  
Volume 4 Issue 4

## Center for School Options and Finance

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### In This Issue

- Military Tier II Diplomas
- Ethics Commission Advice
- SIG Update
- Non-Renewed Schools
- School Finance Updates
- Career-Technical Education Updates
- Parent Engagement
- School Meal Program
- OCS Updates
- Community School Highlights

## Please Inform ODE of Military “Tier II” Diplomas

Members of the e-school roundtable and other community schools have informed the Office of Community Schools (OCS) that some of their high school graduates are experiencing rejections by military recruiters. The reasons for the rejections were attributed to the viewpoint that Internet or computer-based learning opportunities schools are less rigorous than classroom-based education, with diplomas from these schools considered Tier II diplomas. The OCS would like to learn more about this situation. To help us accurately describe the issues, we request that community schools send official communications to us describing any relevant experiences with evidence, data or anecdotal accounts of students being rejected from military service. Please send letters to Bill Nelson at [william.nelson@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:william.nelson@ode.state.oh.us).

## Ethics Commission Advises Community Schools on Restrictions and Family Hires

At its April 22 meeting, the Ohio Ethics Commission approved formal Advisory Opinion No. 2010-01, which explains that the Ohio Ethics Law and related statutes fully apply to community school governing board members and officers. [Advisory Opinion No. 2010-01](#) also emphasizes that ethics statutes prohibit *all* community school board members, officers and employees (including teachers) from hiring or using their influence to hire family members, authorizing contracts for themselves or receiving improper compensation for performing their public duties. These ethics statutes also apply to those serving in traditional public school districts.

An earlier Ethics Commission advisory opinion – based on Ohio’s previous community school legislation – held that community schools were subject to the Ohio Ethics Law but that the General Assembly had authorized limited exceptions applicable to those serving on community school governing boards. Because recently enacted legislation removed those exceptions, the new advisory opinion specifically *overrules* the Commission’s previous opinion related to these exceptions.

Advisory Opinion 2010-01 also notes that, while a legislative exception in Ohio’s Ethics Law exempts teachers from some conflict of interest and post-employment prohibitions when they do not have or exercise administrative and supervisory duties, those non-supervisory teachers are subject to all other ethics and related laws.

The [Ohio Ethics Commission](#) is an independent agency that oversees the Ohio Ethics Law for most state and local public officials and employees. The Commission can provide, on its own initiative or upon request, ethics advice to public officials before they act. For more information, contact: David E. Freel, executive director, or Susan Willeke, education coordinator, at (614) 466-7090.

## **Update Offered on State Improvement Grant**

In March, the U.S. Department of Education approved Ohio's application for \$132 million in School Improvement Grants (SIGs), which will be awarded to struggling schools for improving academic performance. Of the 358 eligible schools, ODE received 210 applications. Once it is determined that the applications are complete, three external readers will score each application following a peer review process conducted by The Ohio State University. Each SIG applicant submitted the name of one confirmed and one alternate reviewer as candidates for the reviewer training. It is important to note that no ODE staff is involved with reviewing the applications, and reviewers will not be allowed to judge a proposal submitted by their institution or an institution for which they have a conflict of interest. The SIGs will be awarded in June, and schools will have access to the funds beginning July 1.

## **Sponsors Are Cautioned About Non-Renewed Schools**

During the last several months, sponsors have notified the Office of Community Schools of their intent to non-renew a number of schools because of unresolved issues, primarily relating to the school's administrative direction, governance problems or unfavorable financial forecasts. A number of the non-renewed schools, however, are attempting to be "revived" by other sponsors. OCS advises sponsors that if a decision is made to engage in a contract with a non-renewed school, such a decision will inevitably raise questions about quality. While there are no legal constraints on sponsors in picking up non-renewed schools, OCS strongly advises sponsors to exercise caution when making such decisions. Moreover, sponsors of these schools should consider requiring a corrective action plan and a limited contract (one- or two-year maximum) to demonstrate the utmost caution. These measures might partially address concerns about re-instating such contracts.

## **School Finance Updates**

### **Fiscal Year 2010 Five-Year Forecast Due in May**

Community schools are required to submit a five-year forecast in May of each fiscal year. Because ODE must receive the updates by **Friday, May 28** to meet the Ohio Administrative Code May 31 deadline, please submit using the approved Auditor of State forecast spreadsheet. **Assumptions are also required to be submitted with the forecasts.** Please destroy all old forms since the updated form is the only one that will be accepted. Also, please note the form has been updated to reflect the stimulus monies and is available [here](#) or by visiting [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov) and searching for: *community school forms*. Please submit the form to Mary Cotton at [mary.cotton@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:mary.cotton@ode.state.oh.us).

### **Tentative SOES Profile and Year-End Closing Dates Outlined**

Procedures are being revised this year to allow community schools to enter profile information directly into the School Options Enrollment System (SOES). Profile information submitted by community schools will be forwarded to school sponsors for approval. We are in the process of ironing out details and will provide more information as it becomes available. Tentative dates for the profiles as well as the fiscal year-end closing are as follows:

- Early June (date TBD) – Community schools begin entering SOES profiles/calendars;
- June 17 – Last day for Community Schools to enter students into FY 2010 database;
- June 25 – Last day for resident districts to flag records unless modified by community schools;
- July 11 – Deadline for community schools to enter SOES Profiles;
- July 16 – SOES closes for FY 2010;
- July 12-16 – At some point during this week, SOES profile information provided by community schools will be forwarded to sponsors for approval via electronic survey.

**SOES Fatal Error Reminder:** The end of the fiscal year is approaching fast. It is important that any existing errors be resolved by the time SOES closes for the fiscal year on July 16.

For SOES questions, please contact Karla Manter at (614) 466-0070 or [karla.mantar@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:karla.mantar@ode.state.oh.us).

## **Career-Technical Education Updates**

### **CTE-26: Deadline for 2011 Program Approval Is June 1**

The deadline to submit the CTE-26 Application for Preliminary Approval of Secondary Career-Technical Workforce Development Programs for FY2011 is June 1. Final approval is contingent upon submission of accurate EMIS data and course offerings. Click [here](#) to download the form, or visit [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov) and search for keywords: *CTE Forms*.

### **New Contact Assigned for CTE Credit Flex**

Dan Stacy is the interim contact in the Office of Career-Technical Education (CTE) for the credit flexibility initiative. For more resources related to implementation of Ohio credit flexibility practices and policy, click [here](#). Results of an April survey to determine credit flex progress and needs have been compiled based on 116 responses. These are being studied to further inform ODE and local stakeholders about the initiative. Contact Dan at [dan.stacy@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:dan.stacy@ode.state.oh.us).

### **CTE Hires New Consultant**

**Eric Landversicht**, formerly an intervention specialist with Bloom Carroll Local Schools, is a new career-based intervention (CBI) consultant. Throughout his career, he has been focused on helping students with social, emotional and academic development to help them achieve full potential as lifelong learners. He has experience with public (traditional and corrections) and community school systems.

## **Parent Engagement Planning Resources**

### **Epstein Model Statewide Meeting is June 24**

Westerville City Schools is providing a statewide opportunity to learn about the Epstein Model for family and community engagement and how it is implemented in Ohio's schools. The model emphasizes parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with the community. Visit the [National Network of Partnership Schools](#) for details on the Epstein Model, which was developed by Joyce L. Epstein, founder and director of the National Network. The statewide meeting will be held from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., Thursday, June 24 at Westerville Central High School, 7118 Mt. Royal Ave, Westerville, OH 43081. Registration is free but limited. Please contact Darlene Mitchell at [darlene.mitchell@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:darlene.mitchell@ode.state.oh.us) to register.

### **Hamilton County Offers Parent and Family Involvement Guide**

Hamilton County Family and Children First Council has a Resource Guide for Ohio districts and school leaders – [Enhancing Family and Parent Involvement](#). The resource guide describes federal and state requirements for family engagement plans and offers samples and templates for your use.

### **CCIP Offers Many Family Involvement Resources**

The Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP) online planning application provides schools with several resources to help in meeting their family engagement responsibilities. They include the:

- *Family-School Partnership Funding Sources* booklet, which includes a list of federal, state and private grants available that support family partnerships;
- *Family Friendly Partnership Project*, which includes suggestions for developing family engagement plans in accordance with the Ohio Improvement Process, State Improvement Grants and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center grants.
- Sample Parent Survey Questions to use in fulfilling the survey requirement for the Title I Targeted Assistance grant.

To access the resources above, click [here](#) for the CCIP Document Library or visit [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov) and search for CCIP. Then access the CCIP and click on Document Library at left. Search for *Parent*, then *Consolidated Funding Application*.

## **ODE Website Features Family and Community Engagement Resources**

To find family and civic engagement resources at [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov), point your cursor on the Learning Support tab at the top and click on Family and Civic Engagement. The following resources will be particularly helpful as you develop plans for 2010-2011:

- Ohio's Promising Practices and Evidence-Based Strategies;
- The Framework for Building School, Family and Community Partnerships;
- Family and Civic Engagement Professional Development;
- House Bill 1 Family and Civic Engagement.

## **School Meal Program – Procuring Vended/Catered Meals**

Please note the following important details in procuring vended/catered meals to fulfill the requirements of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's School Meal Programs:

1. If projected food costs with a vended/catered meal company will be under \$100,000 during the school year, a formal sealed bid process is not required. The school food authority (SFA) must document contact with at least three vendors and obtain competitive price quotations through negotiation. Contracts developed under this option are **not** allowed to be automatically renewed from year to year. The SFA must contact vendors and obtain competitive pricing each year.
2. If projected food costs with a vended/catered meal company will be more than \$100,000 during the National School Lunch Program year, the competitive sealed bid method of procurement **must** be followed. Contracts procured through the sealed bid process are in effect for one year and may be renewed by mutual agreement for four additional one-year periods before formal re-bidding is required.
3. Sample bid and contract documents are available by clicking [here](#) or by visiting [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov) and searching for *procurement*.

If you have questions, please contact the Office for Safety, Health and Nutrition at (800) 808-6325 or (614) 466-2945.

## **OCS Updates**

### **Important FY2010 dates posted in annual timeline**

The Community School Operations FY2010 Annual Timeline is available [here](#) or by visiting [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov) and searching for: *Community School Timeline*. The timeline offers reminders of dates and events such as:

#### **May**

- **Ohio Graduation Tests – May 27** – Hard-copy reports are due in districts; **May 27** – Interactive data will be available.
- **Community School Five-Year Forecast (Due May 28)**: Click [here](#) to access the form. Contact Mary Cotton in the Office of Community Schools at (614) 466-7058 or [mary.cotton@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:mary.cotton@ode.state.oh.us) with questions regarding the timeline.
- **Foundation payment dates**: Payments to community schools are made no later than the tenth business day of each month. The tenth business day next month is June 14.

## June

- **Ohio Achievement Assessment: June 15** – Electronic data files will be ready for download. **June 30** – Hard-copy reports are due in districts. **June 30** – Interactive data will be available. For more information, contact the Office of Assessment at (614) 466-0223.

## Community School Highlights

### **Award for Excellence – Pathway School of Discovery of Dayton**

More than 700 students attended a special event earlier this year when state Rep. Seth Morgan and Rep. Roland Winburn honored Dayton's Pathway School of Discovery for earning an Excellent rating on its 2008-2009 Local Report Card. The legislators presented Pathway Principal Keith Colbert and Board President Kevin Robie with a legislative proclamation. Jim George, executive director of the Lucas County Educational Service Center (LCESC), and Algott Herman, LCESC field representative, prepared this description of Pathway, which LCESC has sponsored since 2004-2005:

- During the last the years, Pathway School of Discovery moved from Continuous Improvement to Effective, and now to Excellent.
- Students show more than one year's worth of growth based on Northwest Evaluation Associations computer adaptive test.
- As an National Heritage Academy school, the school has four pillars serving as a foundation for the school's culture: 1) academic excellence; 2) moral focus; 3) student responsibility; and 4) parental partnership.
- Pathway students support others in need. Most recently, the student council raised more than \$1,800 for relief efforts in Haiti. For a sister school, The Sons of Thunder in Zambia, the students raised more than \$3,000 for new desks, school supplies and sports equipment.
- Beyond academics the school has a technology crew and a guitar/recorder ensemble as well as many special interest groups focusing on the yearbook, school newspaper, video production, drama, choir, intramural sports, interscholastic basketball and volleyball.
- Students and teachers have fun at Pathway. The principal shaved his head after the school received its Effective rating; he and many teachers dyed their hair after earning the Excellent rating. Students routinely have spirit days and other out-of-uniform days. On the Ohio State vs. Michigan day and the "fired up for testing" day, all students can wear red. The school also has quarterly awards assemblies to recognize academic achievement, perfect attendance and moral character.

For more information about Dayton's Pathway School of Discovery, contact Keith Colbert, principal, at (937) 235-5498.

**Note:** An archive of previous Community School E-Newsletters is available by clicking [here](#).